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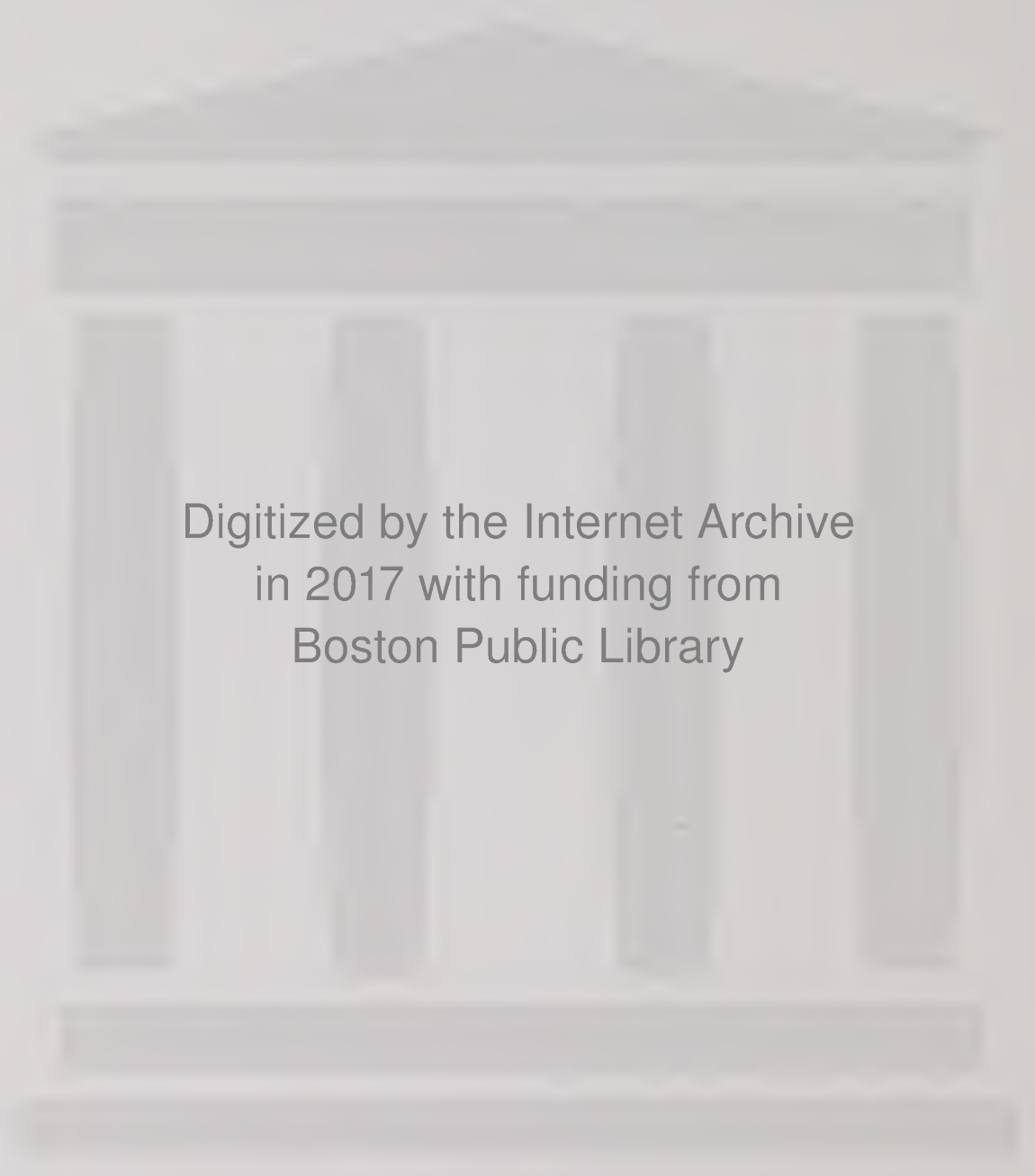


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fall 1998



Parnassus



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Parnassus

Inter-Arts Magazine

*of
Northern Essex
Community College
Haverhill, Massachusetts 01830*

Fall 1998

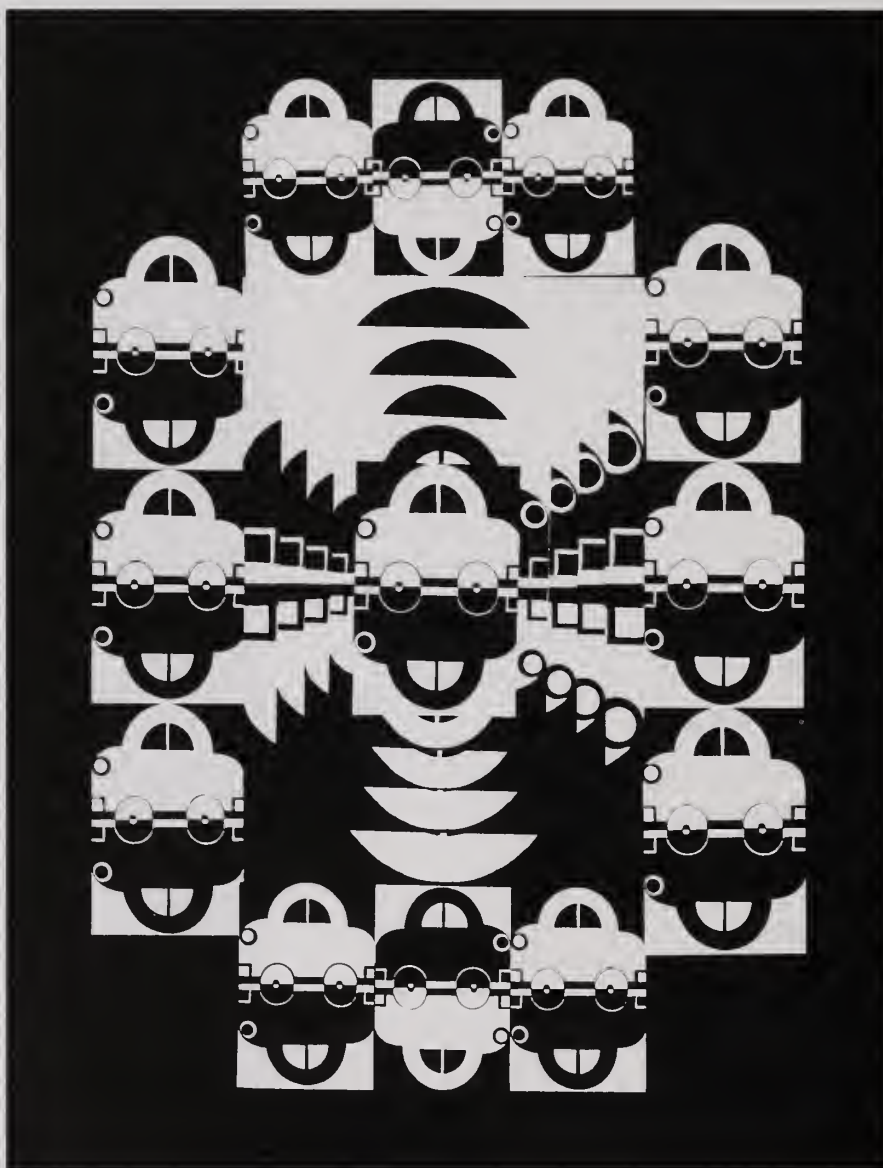
The policy of the editorial staff has been to select material for the magazine democratically.

We have read each work submitted and viewed all artwork.

We voted to determine eligibility: a majority vote for a piece meant publication.

Parnassus provides an opportunity for new artists and writers to reach others; it's a showcase of Northern Essex Community College student creativity.

Parnassus
is the
name
of the
mythological
mountain
home
of the
nine
muses
who
inspired
humankind
in the
arts.



Dawn Mastrovanni

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Secrets

It's the house next to the tension wires, you know, the little white one with the red edges across from the incinerator: no, no, not the big white one with all those fancy cars, the real small one, the one that looks like a pretty little doll house. That's where I live, in the cute- as -a- button house. What? You want to come over? No, no really, I don't think it's a good idea Stella. Well... mainly because Mama doesn't like it when I have friends over. Yes, I guess you really are my best friend in the whole wide world. Well... I suppose just this one time will be OK, but you can only come to my house on one condition. You have to promise me Stella, promise that you'll keep real quiet about it.

Come on in Stella, yeah, I know, isn't it great? We have a whole bunch of cats. I know how much you really like cats Stella. Wanna see where Sweetpea just had her babies? Here, down the hall in the linen closet. Mama says they pick the most special place in the whole house to have their kittens: nice and soft in there on top of all those sheets and pillowcases. If I were a cat, I suppose that's where I'd have my babies too. We have twenty-one of them altogether, three mama cats and the rest are all babies. Here, smell one that was just born. I can tell you, there's nothing like the smell of a newborn kitten. Oh Stella, isn't it just like being in heaven with a tiny little kitty in your hands like that?

Wanna see my bedroom? No, that's my sister's bed. No, that's my other sister's bed. There, that one in the corner, that's mine. Yeah, the room is really small, and we hate each other's guts too. I know it's really gross, you don't have to tell me: Mama says its mold or something. She says Papa lets the trees grow too close to the house.

Someday the stuff from the floor will meet up with the stuff coming down from the ceiling. I've been watching it grow for awhile. Mama says you can't get it off the wallpaper too good. Yeah, I know, it's on the floor and in the corners too. Whatever you do, you can't leave nothing good like a doll or anything under the bed either. They look like they got the chicken pox if they've been under there too

long. No, my little brother doesn't sleep in here. He sleeps in the living room behind the old couch with the slipcovers that always fall off. He pretends it's his bedroom, but Mama says he has to take down all those posters on the walls. Yeah, he stays up real late watching TV. Mama and Papa don't know cause their bedroom is down the hall some.



Diane Garrigus

No Stella, you really don't want to see my parent's bedroom. All that stuff clumped up in there, hardly any room to move around. No Stella, please don't - Mama says to stay out of there - Oh, those, yeah, those are my Papa's. He puts them down real quick when you come in and surprise him. He acts as if he's not really looking at all those pictures. I know, there's millions of them under the bed. There's a whole big pile of them in his little closet too.

Where's the bathroom? It's down the hall past that big grate in the floor where all the heat comes up. You can stand over it when its cold and the hot air will fill up your nightie like a big puffy marshmallow. No, there's only one bathroom, but Stella, you can't throw tissue or anything down the toilet whatever you do. Something to do with the septic. Just throw it in the garbage can. I know, it's OK, we all do it. Don't forget to flush twice. I know it smells. No, no, it's nothing you did Stella, the floor underneath is always soggy. Toilet's always overflowing. Mama makes us pick it up with towels and squeeze them out into the bathtub. Paper towels are expensive you know. Papa says someday he'll fix it. He's always saying he'll fix something, like he says he's gonna fix the basement too. Put in a pump or something. He's been saying that for years..

No, there's no playroom or nothing like that down in the cellar. Sometimes we play hide and go seek in the basement, but only when the weather's really bad, cause Mama always kicks us out of the house to play. She says that's what the playpen is for. It's really creepy down there though; all wet and dark like that. Sometimes too, the cellar floods, like from the rain and sometimes from the washer overflowing. No, we don't have a dryer yet, but Auntie takes us to the laund-o-mat to dry the clothes 'cause we only have one car. She even pays us a

penny for every mosquito and a whole nickel for every fly that we can squash with our own hands. You can make a fortune if you're really fast. Anyway, when it floods down there, Mama makes us roll up our pant legs and scoop up the water in those little cardboard milk cartons. You know the ones, the ones that sit on the kitchen counter and get all smelly and disgusting from the scraps of food and everything that you have to pile up in there. What? Your Mama doesn't do that? I thought everyone did that. Well, anyway, they get all squishy and you can't use them anymore after the first couple of inches. You're feet get real cold and white and wrinkly after awhile, but Mama says we have to stay until the job is done. No, she doesn't help us, she says we can handle it cause we're good Yankee stock. We kids do all the chores that need doing. It's my turn this week to do the dishes and sweep the rug, so I better get going before Mama comes home because she'll start yelling at me if I'm not finished yet. That would mean big trouble for me, because when Papa comes home, my Mama runs around the house yelling, "Be quiet! Your father's home!" We try to be especially quiet, you know, so he can read the newspaper and everything, so maybe you better get going home.

Please Stella, please, before you go, promise me one thing. Cross your heart and hope to die! You have to swear it! Ok, so when they ask you, you know, Polly and especially Victoria, you don't tell them nothing, nothing at all about the inside of my house. You just tell them that we played outside. That's all, you tell them that we played in the fenced in pen in the backyard and pretended we were monkeys. Just please, pretty please Stella, promise you won't tell them nothing about the inside, and just tell those busybodies that I live in the prettiest little white house: the one with the red edges. You know, the one that looks just like a doll house.

Patrice Peddle



Mary L. Coburn



Traci A. Durfee

Loneliness

You have thousands of faces,
But no heart.
You are dreaded, feared and unwanted
As you creep within.

To your residence there seem no end.
You are desolate, severe and unsettling.

In a crowd you are there,
Silently, eating and gnawing away
At my soul.
As you rewind my mind
I see tears, hurt and pain.
Oh! Leave me alone!

You persist, but I resist.
I will not be consumed.
I see a light,
It's the beam of love.
You are growing dim.
Ha! Ha! You can't win.

Veronica Holmes

in walked bud

in walked bud
stumbling in sad child drunkenness
of fragile idiocy
beautiful

a tortured genius trapped
in the false shell
the contrast of bop-bud and other is clear
and completely sad

but the white cop's clubs couldn't silence
the flowing niagara of wonderful jazz
bubbling out of the trembling fingers
of the idiot

and the booze could not beat him,
yet
as the beautiful child of innocence played
and self-destructed
in a whirl of bop beats, bongs, and slurs

Nate Zane

haverhill

i'm beginning to understand the merrimack
i admire its persistence
its lazy undulating waters lapping
on the long abandoned waterfront
once bustling with innocent madmen
all passed

Nate Zane

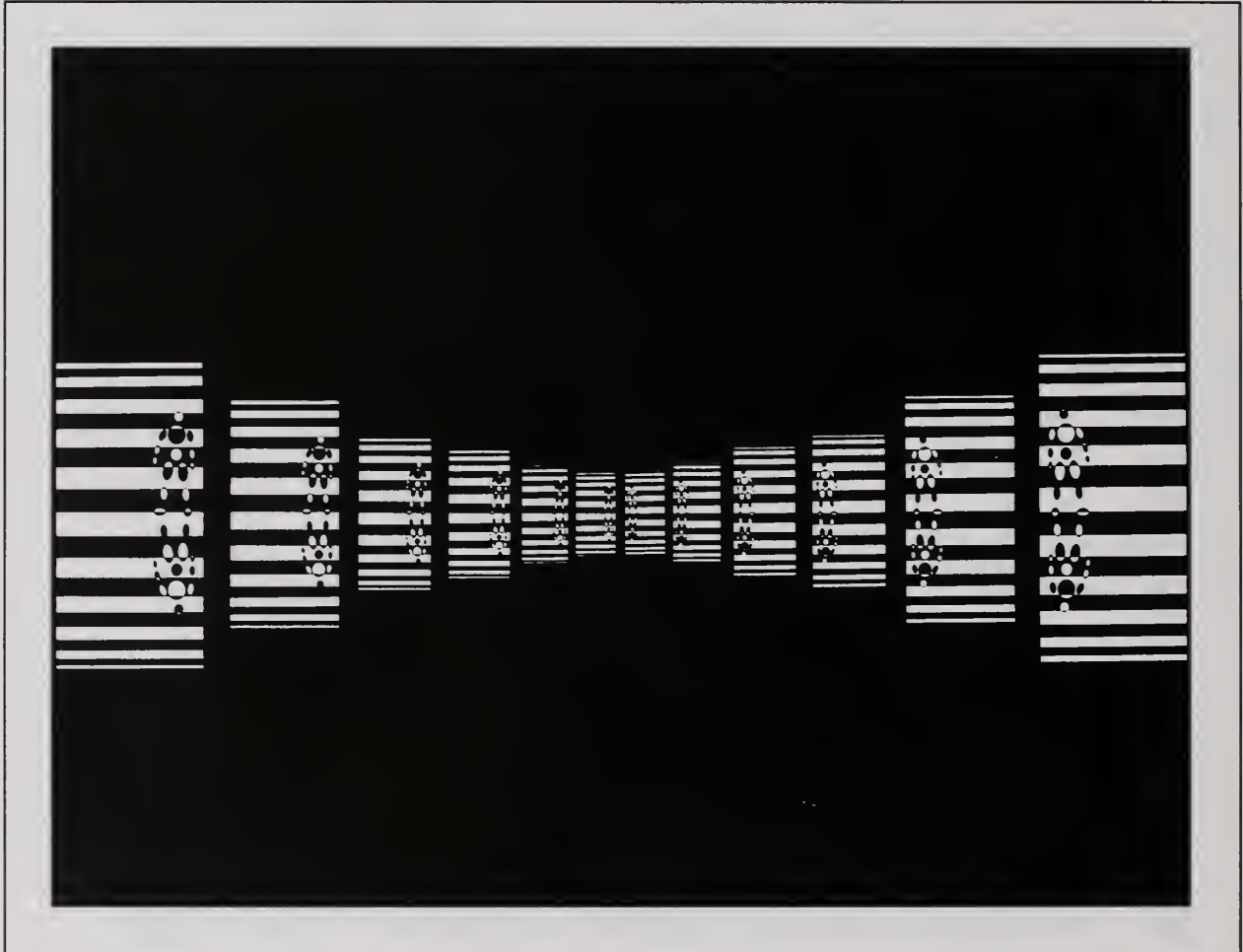
The Blues On A Rainy Day

*Rain flows down my window.
The drops look like tiny men in bubble cars all racing downward to an unforeseen finish
line.
Rain always gets me in the strangest mood.
I hear a voice in the radio say,
"The early bird gets the short end of the stick."
I wonder what that means.
I look back out the window and think my eyes are playing tricks on me.
Are the cars going upwards?
Loud beats are being pounded out of a drum.
Raindrops dancing to the beats.
Everything around me seems to be performing.
Everyone's a star.
My blood is free of alcohol, no drugs flow through my veins.
I'm sane.
Just a lonely man hearing a little blues while looking through his bedroom window.
I try to picture myself out in the rain,
Shedding myself of the clothes on my body and freeing myself from these ropes tied
around my wrists and ankles.
I can't see these ropes but I know they're there.
I feel them cutting through skin.
Raindrops running, racing down my face.
Racing to the finish line.
Raindrops have somewhere to go.
They're going to be late.
I have no appointments, no deadlines to meet.
I just have to bear these ropes that's all.*

Manny Reynoso



Jasmine Gillingham



John Parlatore

New Claimant

Trapped inside, just itching to get out,
Held down, restricted, with so little to do.
Wouldn't it figure, all the time in the world.
Much rather be working, putting my skills to the test.

Waiting, a phone call, to at least fill me in
On just what's going on, to the status of my claim.
Wouldn't it figure, the first time this ever happens
Being stuck with this group, heard stories about them.

Patiently, I sit, doing what is required.
Not even an inch will I give them, for a chance to deny.
Wouldn't it figure, that the ones who suffer,
Suffer due to past frauds, now I pay the price.

Eventually, evaluated, and I proceed to move on
Finally healed, once the problem was found .
Wouldn't it figure, new position, new pain.
And so, here I go, back to square one again!

Joseph Costa

These Immigrants

two steps toward the land of opportunity

sowed with seed of liberty

cultivated by diversity

harvested by new generations in search of hope

my parents came to this country with wishes of succeeding

new culture, new language, new way of thought

no expectance of receiving

their desire was to earn

a better tomorrow for their children

education and well being

looks of intolerance

closed doors

stereotypes without thought

cold was the welcoming

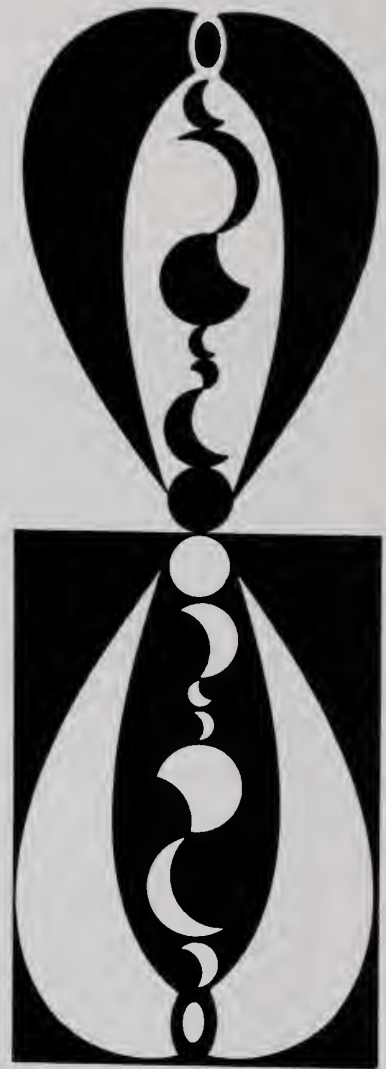
not because of climate but because of those inhabitants that in it are

don't remember that they were once immigrants too

missing the life they left behind

only thinking of that this is their land the one

"these immigrants want to steal"



Traci A. Durfee

Manny Reynoso

Estos Imigrantes

dos pasos hacia la tierra de oportuna
sembrada con semilla de libertad
cultivada por diversidad
cosechada por nuevas generaciones en busca de esperanza

mis padres llegaron al país con anhelo de triunfar
nueva cultura, nuevo idioma, nuevo modo de pensar
no esperaban recibir
su deseo era de ganar
un mejor mañana para sus hijos
educación y bien estar

miradas de intolerancia
puertas cerradas
esteriotipos sin pensar
frío fue el recibimiento
no por el clima si no por los habitantes que en él están

no recuerdan que fueron una vez ellos inmigrante
extranado la vida que dejaron atrás
solo piensan que esta es su tierra la que
"estos inmigrantes quieren robar"

Manny Reynoso



Traci A. Durfee

Trails

Jackie was riding on the trail she had used so many times before. Rocks were spitting out from beneath the tires of her new mountain bike. It was almost dusk and the path was unusually void of people. The new "no trespassing" sign must have scared off the regulars who would often ride these hills. Jackie wasn't about to be told that she couldn't ride here. She had been traversing this area since she was ten. An eighteen-year habit is hard to break. Besides, what right does the government have in

closing this road? It's been a deserted logging road since the beginning of time, she thought.

As Jackie climbed each hill and descended the same wildly, she thought about the sign. It didn't look like the standard issue signs that were often used in the area. Up here in the country woods of Maine, you see many "No Trespassing" signs designating property lines. The one at the edge of the trail looked as though it had been thrown up haphazardly. It was large enough to be effective though.



"TABAREU"

When she had gone approximately two miles up the trail, Jackie noticed an abandoned pickup truck off the side of the path to the right. So that's what made those tire tracks I've been noticing, she said to herself. An Eire feeling came over her. She soon discarded it. Hunters were known to use this road to get to the deep woods to hunt deer. She made a mental note of the license plate number so she could report it when she got back. Hunters, hunting off-season, infuriated her.

Jackie peddled as fast as she could to gain the next hill. This mound is why she peddles out this far into the woods. The back-side has a drop of about 100 feet at an angle which is just enough to keep you from going head over heels. When she reached the pinnacle, she stopped. Her heart began to race as she thought about her descent. Suddenly, she heard a scream. What was that, she thought. She waited. "What was that?" she said aloud, to no one in particular. She waited a moment longer...

An eagle came into her view from high above the treetops. Jackie sighed. "Do you know you scared the daylights out of me?" she said to the majestic bird. And with that, she stood on her pedal and began her descent. Her adrenaline was flowing as she reached speeds of twenty-five miles per hour. The rattling of the bicycle drowned out the subsequent screams that echoed from the forest.

When Jackie came to rest at the top of the following hill, she admired the surrounding beauty. A sense of foreboding swept over her for no reason at all. She discarded it and began her journey home. First, she climbed the hill that, only five minutes previous, she had descended with wild abandonment. "This is a lot more fun going down" she said to the open air. When she reached the pinnacle, the old pickup truck came into view. She decided to take a closer look.

When Jackie peered into the window of the rusty, multi-colored vehicle, she was draped with trepidation. She wasn't prepared for what she saw. Blood stained the torn interior of the truck. What looked to be a torn woman's shirt lay in a bundle on

the floor. Next to it was an empty bottle of Jack Daniels. The windshield was cracked from the inside. An opened box of shotgun shells were spread across the seat and a woman's purse was barely visible from beneath an old newspaper. As Jackie contemplated her next move, a shotgun blast echoed from the trees, not far from where she stood.

Jackie grabbed her bicycle and peddled as fast as she could in the direction of the path's entrance. As she gained the third hill, a park ranger came into view. She hurried in his direction. As she drew closer, the familiar face of John Young became clear. He could see the look in her eyes and immediately asked her what was wrong. She explained what she had seen in the pickup truck and the shotgun blast. He had heard it too. They discussed their options. They were still a mile and a half from the nearest road and whoever their enemy was, he was bound to be returning soon.

John reasoned that the person would surely see them on the road so they opted for the cover of the forest until the shooter drove by. Then they would return to town for help. Together, they hid Jackie's bicycle and found a place to hide that had a good view of the path.

While they sat waiting, John loaded his weapon.

"I have a feeling I'm going to need this" he stated flatly.

"You carry an unloaded weapon?" she queried.

"Not usually" he answered.

"Then, why did you today"

"I must have forgot to load it"

As he loaded the gun, Jackie noticed the faint smell of gunpowder. Suddenly, the smell of whisky began to penetrate her nostrils. She froze. The hair on the back of her neck stood on end. Her heart began to race. Sweat flowed from her temples freely. Intense heat swept over her body. *Click, click,* she heard John set both hammers of his gun.

Alan Biovert

Ma

It was late, probably past 2am. That's when the bars closed. Every time a car drove by I would run to the window to look out to see if it was a taxi. My stomach was in knots. My mother would be coming home soon and I dreaded it. I knew that she would be drunk and angry. She was always angry when she was drunk. I never knew what to expect on these nights when I was home baby- sitting my younger brother and sister while my mother was out. My father was often gone on business trips during these times when my mother drank.

All I could hope for was that she wouldn't be in a bad mood or that she was bringing someone home with her. If she had someone with her then she would have company and I could go to bed. If she was alone then I would have to stay up and sit at the kitchen table with her and listen. I listened attentively, as if my life depended on it, nodding my head in agreement with whatever she said. Sometimes it wasn't so bad. She would sit there and talk at me until she finally got tired. Other times she came home furious.

I really can't remember what mood she was in on this one particular night when the taxi dropped her off. I think back now and all I can remember was her sitting there at the kitchen table with a razor blade in her hand. She was going to kill herself. I sat across from her at the table watching. All I could say in a quiet voice was, "Ma, don't do it." I didn't dare say or do anything else because I was afraid that she might decide to cut me with the razor. And I didn't want to die.

And so I watched. She took the razor and slowly dragged it over her wrist. The first time wasn't deep enough. The blood just oozed out slowly. So she cut again. This time harder and deeper. The blood came out faster this time. It didn't squirt out like I thought it would. It sort of pulsed out. Thick. Rolled down her hand and onto the table. And she talked. I don't remember what she was talking about or how long we sat there at the kitchen table.

She talked as if nothing unusual was happening. I expected her to get weak or something. But she just kept talking and I just kept sitting there listening, occasionally looking down at the blood pumping out of her body. Then I remember her getting a towel and wrapping it around her wrist. I could smell the blood. The towel turned red and she calmly took it off and got another one. The bleeding seemed to be slowing down. She went upstairs and went to bed.

I went to bed too. I remember wondering if she'd be dead in the morning. I didn't dare do anything. If I did *anything* I thought she might kill me. If I didn't do anything, she might die. But also, if I didn't do anything, she might live. And we'd both be o.k..

She lived. We both lived.

L. L.

Black

Dark as hell

White

A dead man's face

Red

The demon's blood

Orange

A fire's flame

Yellow

The eyes of hate

Green

A look of envy

Blue

A lover's down

Purple

The fool's charm

Pink

A haunting laugh

Gray

A rainy day

Black

Dark as hell

Pamela Doherty



M. Aguril

An excerpt from... Whitefeather's Last Dance

Here is the too bright Saturday morning. Here am I. Stepping hurriedly into the elevator. Punching the white and black button. Number three. It lights up like a small orange moon. I am the lone occupant in this steel-walled clinkety-clinking chamber. Just as well. I berate the mechanical cage loudly for its sluggish, clunky, poky ascension. Ah, damn fool contraption! Now I am in 342, out of breath, facing an empty bed. You wouldn't know a person had slept there at all, so neat and unlined are the sheets, the one soft blue blanket folded squarely at the foot. The body which had lain there must have rested well. Peacefully. Slept the sleep of the dead.

A nurse stands in the doorway. Sympathetic eyes meet mine. What has happened? She speaks in a high-pitched rush. "Oh. You must be the daughter. He's gone already--No, no! Don't worry. They got him down to surgery earlier than planned, that's all." Then, "Go left, and left again. See the waiting room for ICU right outside OR."

I exhale, wheel around, sprint down the deserted hall, heels clacking offensively on tile. Left again. Unfair, unfair. I was precise. On time. Early, even. The doctors were more timely. Or untimely, depending on how you view things. Audacious, I think, nearly spitting anger into the air. To take him away before I could see him. Just to--wish good luck. Say--Break a Leg? *Something*, anyway. They had, the two Irish physicians and Doctor Walker, the Good Scot who makes up the final complement of this triad of modern medicine men, suited up in de rigueur blue cotton at exactly eight.

Not till nearly eleven does the sandy-haired surgeon enter the waiting room, approaching my mother and me with quiet feet and something akin to apologetic resignation. His serious face with its too-honest blue eyes

floats above the blue mask hanging loose around his neck. The eyes are like small clear ponds reflecting truths I already feel in the bones. Good news, bad news. Which will we take first? Your dad came through it all just fine. His mouth turns up slightly at the corners, "Remarkable fellow. Cracking jokes right up till he went under. Said he felt like Damocles at the banquet."

Remarkable? My father?

Silly, sometimes. And--my mother has often complained in their fifty-two years together that her husband is the most *slippery* man alive. His son-in-law throws up hands, shakes head, calling him Chameleon, Damn-Light-And-Shadow-Man. As for me, well, there is consensus... I have been known to characterize him as wily. *Cannily* cantankerous. Exasperating person---with his knack for discovering others' *hot buttons*. An impish creature, he takes inordinate delight in provoking, arousing the pique of hapless victims. Gleefully awaiting any incendiary rise to his challenge.

Okay--in his way, he's *unique*. But also--*remarkably* difficult.

The operation took longer than expected. He's pretty weak. From a physician's perspective, well, obviously, the fellow's fought some tough battles in the past. But he's got grit and his spirit's prevailed. Let's hope it will this time.

Battles? Grit? Spirit?

His voice drops an octave, hesitates. Adhesions? Tricky things, removed...not life threatening. No. No tumor. But...

But is a very loud word. A sound-barrier breaking wave erasing overhead.

"We found an aneurysm on his aorta."

*

Nine days have passed since the initial procedure, discovery. My father and mother and I are sitting in the surgeon's muzak-filled office listening as he talks about options. *Options?* Uh-huh. Do nothing. But this means that, ultimately, he will bleed to death. *Or? Go* for it, have the operation. He could still bleed to death. On the table. *Well?* Okay, if he pulls through... there is still danger. This dilation of the blood vessel has already severely stressed the body. So. Afterward...life will differ markedly from what it is today. Strength diminished, activities curtailed.

Straightforward man. Pulls no punches. We know now that if the balloon pops the hemorrhage will be horrific. Fatal. And the operation is complicated. Long, difficult. Painful. Impossible to understate this. He rattles off statistics, minute details. I close my ears, trying to slink into the safety of denial. One must not be too impressed with numbers, with all this data, I tell myself. And yet, my eyes are drawn to the doctor's fine thin hands. I wonder if precision and skill and experience are sufficient to tackle the monster, the terrible entity we so glibly, in our ignorance, referred to as the *moon rock*, the *unborn child*.

I know her name now. Call her Hydra. She has been growing for a long time. She is large. Nine centimeters. A parasite. Feeding on the tree of life. Her sustenance: red blood meant for the heart. Knowing only the sin of gluttony, she gorges herself and is near to bursting. She, Hydra of the Nine Heads, has tangled herself around the trunk of the tree; she meanders through gnarly roots. Her tentacles reach upward as well, the many selves entwining in the delicate branches above. She laughs, dares Hercules slay her.

The information session closes. My father is quiet, nodding that he understands his predicament. He must be afraid. Who wouldn't be? But it doesn't show on the face and he does not flinch.

A decision must be made. Quickly. The physician tries to include me. No. I do not want to be part of the *choice*. I am not the parent. Grown, in the third season of life, I am yet the child. I will not, cannot, make life or death decisions for another.

Paperwork must be filled out, schedules arranged. Yes, it is tricky to wait. We are talking implosion, explosion here. Flip a coin; it is just as tricky to operate too soon. He is, after all, an old man in a weakened state, a man whose arteries are ratty. My father listens carefully, taps fingers against the polished walnut desk. His eyes stare across the room, probing the knotty wormwood of the far wall.

A long minute passes. The room is heavy with quiet. The mind drifts. Now I find myself thinking of the deep white silence of wilderness in winter. Finally, a shrug, shoulders lift toward the ceiling. He looks directly at the doctor's face. When he speaks, his voice is soft, softer than snow kissing pine.

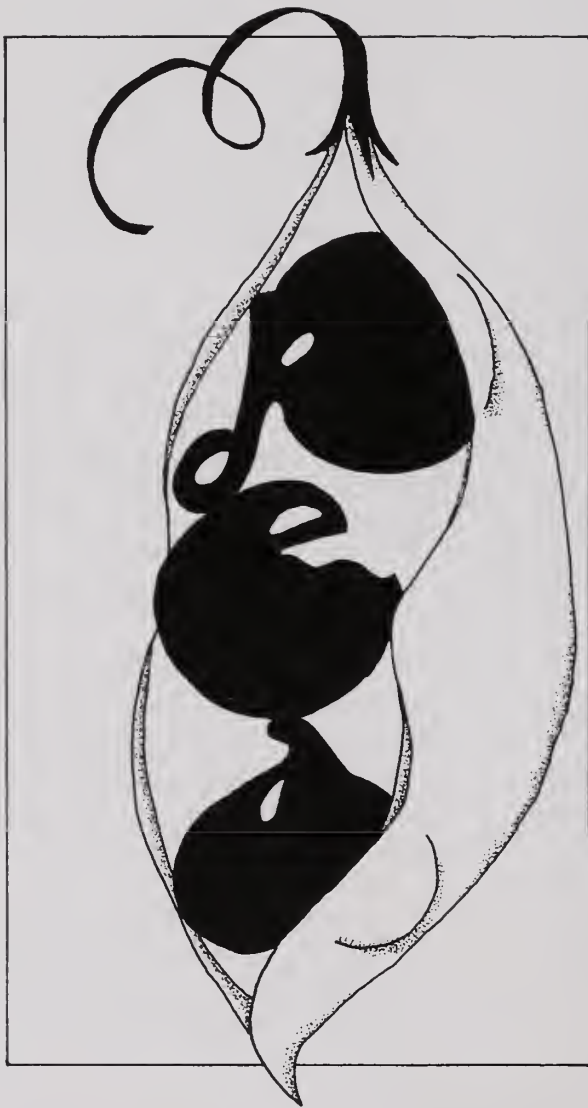
"Yes. Let's get it done with."

So. It will be sooner, not later. Not quite three weeks to recuperate from the initial cutting, excisions. Next will come the preliminary, a heart catheterization, itself a scary prospect. Two days later, the major surgery, the delicate snipping which must separate him and his aneurysm.

m. j. wagner

FISH

A tiny fish jumps,
cracking the pool's placid face,
to spherical smiles.



Ginnie Lavoie

SUNFLOWERS

Sunflowers of Fall,
consent to approaching doom,
by bowing their heads.

BIRD SONG

A little bird's song,
frail is its soft melody,
strengthened by the wind.

Lynn Lipari



Diane Garrigus

Friends

It was dimly lit and had a couple of pool tables and a dartboard. Biker memorabilia was scattered about. My friend and I approached the bar, where she was greeted by her numerous friends. She introduced me around, and everybody made me feel welcomed.

The bar was tended by a stunning, well endowed girl with long curly brown hair and brown eyes. She wore a tiny pair of white shorts, and a black tank top that didn't do much to conceal how well endowed she was.

As she approached, my friend said, "Kev, I'd like you to meet my friend Melanie."

"Hi," I said, smiling. Thinking to myself: what a set, talk about something that gets your attention, big and beautiful. I couldn't take my eyes off of them. How could someone be blessed with such an exquisite set, of entrancing, deep brown eyes.

The jukebox began to play a familiar tune, Lynyrd Skynyrd's "Free Bird", an excellent tune. We found ourselves lost in some treasurable memories from the past, as though it were yesterday. We've known each other now for more than two decades. Our friendship prevails most others we know.

The different stimulating and abandoned scents of perfume were blending with the scents of cigarettes, leather, and alcohol.

"Kevin, come with me. I want you to meet my friend Paige. You'll like her. See her over there with my sister Nikki?"

I said, "Okay, lead the way."

Paige had golden blonde hair, with soft green eyes, and an incredible little gymnast's body. A nice welcoming hug and kiss. She smelled voluptuous. "So you're Kevin. She never shuts up about you, you know. She defines you as a treasured friend."

"Let's get some more drinks, and play some pool," they said.

"Okay, lets do it," I said.

They set up to play, and I was going to play the winner. I watched them play. Then Paige went to the jukebox and went back to the table to play. Another favorite tune begins to play, Bad Company's "Silver, Blue, and Gold" making the atmosphere very welcoming to me.

"Jello shots" were starting to be brought around; some orange with tequila, some cherry with vodka, very tasty, very satisfying, a little treat to go with the Molson's.

After I played the winner, they suggested we get a little something to eat. "The place next door serves the best scallops," they said.

"Sounds great to me," I said. We got two versions, one was fried, and the other, was wrapped in bacon. No doubt about it, these scallops were sweet, succulent, and satisfying.

After we ate, we went back next door and met up with Nikki and Melanie. So they got us into drinking some Captain Morgan spiced rum and coke. Off in the distance, you could hear the darts puncturing the board. Paige and Melanie were going to go play a game.

Angel and Nikki stayed seated with me, and we all talked about the good ole days; we were inseparable, always partying together, two sisters that I had an excellent relationship with, and have known for so many treasurable years. The jukebox once again played a tune from one of my favorite local groups, Boston. The song was "More Than A Feeling." It was as though the jukebox had known all the music that would make me feel great and be able to reminisce with my dear friends.

We partied right into the morning, and then it was time to go. A very memorable time was what this turned out to be.

I just have to close my eyes, and I can psychologically be there, everything from the voluptuous scents of perfume to the cigarettes, leather and alcohol; to the Molsons's and the succulent scallops, even, the barmaid with her incredible set, of big and beautiful brown eyes.

Kevin Dempsey



Ginnie Lavoie



Mary L. Coburn



"TABAREU"

SOME HAIKUS

Her body, a shell
Life inside has faded out
letting soul escape

The mark of mankind
past midnight on the subway
Wafts in the dead air

April A. Guilmet



Andrea Shine

ONE MOTHER'S DAY

And this is the way one mother's day happens
and begins in hazy, groggy, fumbling attempts to wake
because of all the medication she takes
and the greeting demands of cherubs prevail
and she gets through the morning with dad's visit
and coffee,
and more coffee,
and because she is bored she wanders aimlessly
and the loneliness is forboding
and dad takes them out for lunch
and dad sits with her while the children play in his backyard
and mental illness does not go away, it hangs around, it lingers
and this one mother feels doomed, lost
and dad brings supper over
and the children go to sleep
and she is left alone, wandering aimlessly
and she postpones sleep
and she dreads sleep
because sleep will bring another morning, another day.

D. M. Saunders

PRAISE FOR THE MYSTERIOUS CREATION

I breathe
I dance
I sing my own name
I am the child of sun and moon and rain
I am the daughter conceived by dawn by dusk
 upon the starry bed of twilit sky
I am the teardrop fallen from the cloud's eye
 the tear that nourishes each blade of grass
I am the fleeting smile the laughter borne on silver wind
 hear my whisper in the amber the turning crimson leaf
 hear my voice within the bright pyracantha bush
 I am the fire berry burning filled with flame

I am the contented sigh
 within the breeze

I am the living thing
 I am flower fruit tree

I am the azure hollyhock daisy painted on the hill
I am the shape of heart wild purple violet whose petals
 keep the honeybee safe within its silken purse
I am the graceful slipper pink fleur-de-lis her step imperial

I am yellow yellow yellow Always in every place Yellow
 Summer Sunflower Blackeyed Susan Goldenrod Late Aster
 Evening flower looking north south east west
 Pale lace of Moonlit Primrose

I am the beginning the end the edge of the orchard
 perfect apple sweet enticing in the orange field

I am the yellow tulip tree holding morning's promise renewal
I am perfume of magnolia hemlock pine blue-needled spruce
 slender paper birch ancient yellow sassafras a great white ash
I am the tapered bough of willow yellow willow
 green hair of willow bending low to water
 druid bowed offering silent verdant prayer
 I am willow willow past past weeping

I am every newborn seed
 I am the unsung virtue of each lonely weed
 I am the last song of winter leafless tree

I am the Dream of the Dreamer

I Dream My Self into Being

I am timeless perfect clarity

I am mystery mirror image of my soul's own delirious contemplation

m. j. wagner



Kelly J. Sanborn



Hillary Stran

The Marriage of Jenny May Waite-- Caught on Silver Plate. Fall. 1863.

The servant girl from the Isle of Wight
At precisely nine this September morn
Formally becomes mistress of the home--
Wedding her master's son.

Here, in speckled daguerreotype
Buried, pressed down flat
in the soft kiss of scarlet velvet nap
Way inside the hidden drawer, the heart
Of Jenny's secret marriage gift--
A beloved cherry-wood button box--

The bride wears a dreamlike glow
A sadly half-expectant expression.
Little, wistful smile wavering
Upon her porcelain face.
Black jet-encrusted satin,
Whalebone stays,
Pulled painful-tight
Accentuate the tiny,
Girlish waist.
One hand holds
A single curling rose
Snow-white.
Covering her nervous breast.

The handsome groom,
Young fine-eyed Yankee
Stands off to her left
In this scarred photograph.
Heels tight together
Feet straight ahead,
Tall fellow, rigid
Stiffer than his cuffs, and collar.

Above his knotted silk cravat
Face, eyes of a jacklit deer.
Confused. Caught under
Weight of steely
Trundling carriage wheels.
Consumed.
By love's pure light.

Five months hence
In this same room
A pall descends.
Again. Harsh scream
Of winter blows
Its frigid breath
Through town
Over whitened streets.
Past cold candent
Windowpane.

Here, the first of seven,
Jenny's child--
A son,
Tonight
Will be
Stillborn.

m. j. wagner

Focus on Our Contributors

In this issue of Parnassus, we are starting a new practice of featuring several regular contributors to this magazine. In this issue our featured contributors are Kelly Sanborn, whose drawing of leaves is on the cover and whose sketch of a bird is on page 33, and m. j. wagner, two of whose poems, "Praise for the Mysterious Creation" and "The Marriage of Jenny May Waite," appear on page 32 and 35. An excerpt from "Whitefeather's Last Dance," a profile of her father, is on page 22. Brief biographies of each contributor appear below.

Kelly Sanborn

Kelly Sanborn knew she was interested in art by the age of six. She attended Haverhill public schools and had won several awards for her art by the time she was twelve. In high school, her work twice won the gold key award in The Boston Globe student art contest. Kelly attended Northern Essex, where her drawing was used on the cover of Parnassus a number of years ago, then transferred to Mass College of Art where she studied for three years. Recently she returned to Northern Essex to explore the biotechnology program. This semester, after twelve years away from art classes, she is taking Drawing II with Terry Cargan. Kelly is considering a career in biology or medical illustration, which would combine her artistic talents and her interest in science.

Marilyn (m. j.) Wagner

Marilyn has recently been the recipient of several prizes and awards for her writing accomplishments. She received the NECC Gabriel Brahm prize in American Literature (1996), shared second prize in fiction in the Seacoast Writers Association's annual contest (1997 and 1998), and received fourth prize in the Newburyport Art Association's poetry competition (1998). She was also selected for the Maine Writers and Publishers Alliance Annual Writing Retreat in 1998. She credits several NECC professors for their guidance and inspiration, including Gene Connolly, Andrew Woolf, Priscilla Bellairs, Barbara Stachniewicz and Cathy Sanderson. Some of her favorite poets include Wallace Stevens, T. S. Eliot, E. E. Cummings, Gertrude Stein, Charles Olson and John Ashbery.

Marilyn states, "I have always had a love affair with language; one of my early aspirations was to become a poet or writer. Poetry was always, for me, the very life breath. I returned to school and again was introduced to first one teacher, then another, and another, all of whom gave me reason to believe I had some talent, gift, ability...to write well. And this time around I really listened closely to what was being said; it took awhile but I began to believe it might be possible to really DO something with this passion for the written word. There is so much to learn, so many opportunities, possibilities. I've been blessed, truly...because I have finally found the courage to believe that I can go anywhere, do anything with the language I so love."

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